



Desert Hills Fire District

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Desert Hills Fire District Board Meeting Minutes Regular Meeting, May 17, 2023

1. Call to order

Board Member Roger called to order the Desert Hills Fire District Board meeting at **9:01 a.m. on Wednesday, May 17, 2023**, at the Desert Hills Fire Station Si-Mock Room located at 3983 London Bridge Road, Lake Havasu City, AZ.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Pledge of Allegiance commenced by Board Member Roger

3. Roll Call

The following Board Members were present:

Tom Roger
Curtis Schafer
Char Beltran
Jimmy Wilson
Rich Fountain

Also, in attendance:

Battalion Chief Stanec
Battalion Chief Bunn
Administrative Specialist Harrison

4. Call to the Public: None

5. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for April 19, 2023: Board Member Schafer motioned to accept Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Board Member Wilson, all in favor.

6. Reports:

a) **Fire Administration Report:** Battalion Chief Stanec reports;

- Following our last board meeting the Mohave County Board of Supervisors voted not to charge fire districts the \$1.62 per parcel to offset the Assessors and Treasurer fees. It was voted against 3/2.
- BM Fountain invited us to the American Legion Auxiliary meeting, were they donated \$1,700 to our district. A huge thank you to the American Legion's Auxiliary.
- We held our 2nd Employee Retention Committee meeting last week. It was very productive with lots of good conversations and feedback on how we can retain our members.
- Later today BC Bunn and myself will be attending a meeting in Golden Valley. The area Chiefs have been talking about Joint Power Authorities (JPA's), which is multiple districts merging. They tried it up river a few years back, at that time it wasn't the right time. They are discussing it again and have invited other districts from our county to participate. We have never been involved in JPA's so we will be participating to learn and see if it is or is not beneficial to our district.

b) **Fire Operation Report:** Battalion Chief Bunn reports;

- Our call stats are currently at 292 calls, up 62 calls from last month.
- We had three (3) significant fire, all three (3) were on C-Shift. Unfortunately, on 4/23/2023 the fire resulted in a loss of life. The initial arriving crew did an amazing job of making entry and gaining control of the fire.

Captain Sayre ran initial command and did a great job. ATF ruled it accidental. The second fire was in Crystal Beach. A repairman was working on the air conditioning, turned on the power and smelled smoke and instantly shut it off and called 911. The new thermal cameras played a large role in locating the fire in the duct work. Early this morning there was another fire in Crystal Beach caused by an air conditioning unit. Crew got there quickly and knocked it down. Three (3) people were displaced, we used the Red Cross and the gift card from the Auxiliary to get them somewhere to sleep.

- We had a captains meeting, that went well no major complaints.
- Fire Inspector Jeff Stancil is attending a Fire Investigator 1A training in Bakersfield, CA. The class is May 15th – May 19th. This will help to enhance Jeff's investigation skills. He's attending with a LHVFD member. They are going to use our pictures from last night's fire as a case study, to help determine the cause of the fire.
- Next month BC Bunn will be attending the NFPA conference in Las Vegas for 2 days. It's a Spotlight on Community Education.
- We have an update on the ARPA Grant Funding. We will begin the procurement process following our policy. We will be required to meet applicable guidelines for APRA funding. We will purchase the equipment than submit for reimbursement from the county. We are working with the State Contracts to get the best prices.
- We installed new electrical lines in the apparatus bay to help the auxiliary next pancake breakfast season. We added two (2) extra dedicated circuits for the biscuit station.
- I met with Havasu Wiring to get a bid for security cameras for station 1 & 2, along with a camera for the classroom for training purposes.

c) **DHFD Auxiliary Report:** Auxiliary President Rich Fountain reported they are in the process of making a cookbook with firefighter's recipes. BC Stanec states the firefighters are on board with the cookbook. Rich states its another way to generate money for the fire district. Board Member Roger thanked Rich and the Auxiliary for all they have done for the fire district.

d) **Correspondence:** None

7. New Business:

- a.) **Discussion and possible action re: Approval of monthly Financial Report.** Administrative Specialist Harrison states that the Grant Savings Account is \$31,245.49, Payroll Account \$66,445.63, Petty Cash \$100.00, Special Revenue Checking Account \$33,002.88, Special Revenue Savings Account \$188,227.89, Warrant Account \$1,270,511.78, with a total balance of \$1,589,533.67. Motioned by Board Member Roger to approve the financial report as presented with the corrected Balance Sheet, seconded by Board Member Wilson, all in favor.
- b.) **Discussion and possible action re: Approval for Arizona Fire Incident Management Systems Grant.** BC Stanec states we were granted the Arizona Fire Incident Management Systems Grant. It is a \$180,000 funding award with a zero match. The performance period is over three (3) years. This grant was made possible by Senate Bill 1711, which allocated 6 million dollars of funding statewide. The grant is for technology, our fire engines and command staff will have computers. They will be internet and GPS enabled. They will be in real time and be able to see where other engines are, there will be a digital command board, google maps and GIS technology. There will be TV screens at the stations so when a call goes out it will come up on the screen with the address and map, along with dispatch notes. It should work good with our new radios we will be getting. There's a staffing model, it will track personal scheduling. Board Member Wilson motions to accept the Arizona Fire Incident Management Systems Grant, seconded by Board Member Fountain, all in favor.
- c.) **Discussion and possible action re: Budget Workshop; approval for proposed budget.** Board Member Roger begins with discussions from the Employee Retention Committee meeting. He stated there was a little bit of intensity in the room. We received a copy of the wage comparison between districts and Desert Hills is the second lowest paid fire fighters in the area. Our last board meeting we agreed to increase wages by 5%, which is two-steps. At the retention meeting one of our captains presented the national inflation rate from 2020 through 2022, that showed that the 5% was about 2.5% short of just matching inflation. BM Beltran and I felt it was appropriate to increase wages by another 2.5%, which is one more step. For a total of 3 step increase for next fiscal year. The initial fire fighter request for pay was \$3 an hour increase. The board can not do a \$3 increase, but we are trying to get to an acceptable increase for all. BC Stanec states we know they desire more pay but what can we afford currently and long term. He feels three-steps is feasible and the right thing to do. BM Fountain asked "what the process is to get to the next step on the pay scale". BC Stanec replied "it's reviewed annually, if there's money in the budget, there's board approval, and the fire fighter has a meet expectation employee evaluation. If all three-take place they are eligible for an increase. Also, if the board chooses to increase by three-steps this year, we will need to look at revising our current steps, as a number of employees will be at step 10. Admin Harrison states that minimum wage is going up so we will need to adjust for that.

Admin Harrison presented a proposed budget with a two-step increase and a three-step increase. Everything remained the same as presented at last board meeting except the personal cost. The change in the carry forward for step two is \$1,320,731 and the carry forward for step three is \$1,275,143. A difference of \$45,588.

Board Member Beltran states she agrees with the three-step increase, but would also like to see more done with education incentives. This will help also with recruitment. All board members are in agreement with the three-step increase.

Board Member Beltran motions to accept the proposed budget as presented with the increase of the levy limit from 3.3750 to 3.50 and a three-step increase in wages, seconded by Board Member Wilson, all in favor.

8. Board Member Comments:

- a) **New Business to be considered on future agendas:** None
- b) **Comments:** None

9. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn at 9:48 by Board Member Beltran, seconded by Board Member Wilson, all in favor.